

Ryan P. Ruggerello (#216633)
Kristan L. Ruggerello (#216641)
RUGGERELLO LAW GROUP L.L.P.
19800 MacArthur Blvd., Ste. 650
Irvine, California 92612
Telephone: (949) 293-7689
Ryan@RuggerelloLaw.com

Attorneys for Defendant,
Subaru of America, Inc.

KNIGHT LAW GROUP, LLP
Roger Kirnos (SBN 283163)
kirnosrk@knightlaw.com
Russell Higgins (SBN 226124)
russellh@knightlaw.com
Debra Reed (SBN 268914)
10250 Constellation Blvd., Suite 2500
Los Angeles, CA 90067
Telephone: (310) 552-2250
Fax: (310) 552-7973 2500
Los Angeles, California 90067

Attorneys for Plaintiff,
Blanca Medina

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

BLANCA MEDINA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

SUBARU OF AMERICA, INC., a New
Jersey Corporation, and DOES 1 through
10, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. **2:24-cv-03227-JFW(Ex)**

Assigned to:
District Judge Hon. John F. Walter
Magistrate Judge Hon. Charles F. Eick

**STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
ORDER**

Complaint Filed: January 11, 2024

///

///

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3, below, that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the procedures that must be followed and the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from the court to file material under seal.

1.2 GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

This action is likely to involve trade secrets, customer lists and other valuable research, development, commercial, financial, technical and/or proprietary information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecution of this action is warranted. Such confidential and proprietary materials and information consist of, among other things, confidential business or financial information, information regarding confidential business practices, or other confidential research, development, or commercial information (including information implicating privacy rights of third parties), information otherwise generally unavailable to the public, or which may be privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure under state or federal statutes, court rules, case decisions, or common law. Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information, to facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery materials, to

adequately protect information the parties are entitled to keep confidential, to ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable necessary uses of such material in preparation for and in the conduct of trial, to address their handling at the end of the litigation, and serve the ends of justice, a protective order for such information is justified in this matter. It is the intent of the parties that information will not be designated as confidential for tactical reasons and that nothing be so designated without a good faith belief that it has been maintained in a confidential, non-public manner, and there is good cause why it should not be part of the public record of this case.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Action: *Blanca Medina v. Subaru of America, Inc.*, Case No. 2:24-cv-03227-JFW(Ex)

2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation of information or items under this Order.

2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in the Good Cause Statement.

2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their support staff).

2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information or items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including, among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

1 2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter
2 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as
3 an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

4 2.8 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action.
5 House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside
6 counsel.

7 2.9 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or
8 other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

9 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a party
10 to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and have
11 appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm which
12 has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

13 2.11 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,
14 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their
15 support staffs).

16 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or
17 Discovery Material in this Action.

18 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support
19 services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or
20 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium)
21 and their employees and subcontractors.

22 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is
23 designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

24 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material
25 from a Producing Party.

1 3. SCOPE

2 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only
3 Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or extracted
4 from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or compilations of
5 Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or presentations by Parties
6 or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

7 Any use of Protected Material at trial will be governed by the orders of the trial
8 judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

9
10 4. DURATION

11 Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations
12 imposed by this Order will remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees otherwise
13 in writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition will be deemed to be
14 the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this Action, with or without
15 prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the completion and exhaustion of all
16 appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or reviews of this Action, including the time
17 limits for filing any motions or applications for extension of time pursuant to
18 applicable law.

19
20 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

21 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.
22 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under this
23 Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that qualifies
24 under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for protection
25 only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written communications that
26 qualify so that other portions of the material, documents, items, or communications
27 for which protection is not warranted are not swept unjustifiably within the ambit of
28 this Order.

1 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations
2 that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper
3 purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose
4 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating Party
5 to sanctions.

6 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it
7 designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party must
8 promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

9 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in
10 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise
11 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection
12 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or
13 produced.

14 Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

15 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic documents,
16 but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial proceedings), that the
17 Producing Party affix at a minimum, the legend "CONFIDENTIAL" (hereinafter
18 "CONFIDENTIAL legend"), to each page that contains protected material. If only a
19 portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing
20 Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate
21 markings in the margins).

22 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for inspection
23 need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated
24 which documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and before
25 the designation, all of the material made available for inspection will be deemed
26 "CONFIDENTIAL." After the inspecting Party has identified the documents it wants
27 copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which documents, or
28 portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then, before producing the

1 specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the “CONFIDENTIAL legend”
2 to each page that contains Protected Material. If only a portion or portions of the
3 material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly
4 identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the
5 margins).

6 (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify the
7 Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the deposition all
8 protected testimony.

9 (c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for any
10 other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the exterior
11 of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend
12 “CONFIDENTIAL.” If only a portion or portions of the information warrants
13 protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, will identify the protected
14 portion(s).

15 5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent
16 failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the
17 Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for such material.
18 Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable
19 efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this
20 Order.

21 22 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

23 6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a
24 designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court’s
25 Scheduling Order.

26 6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party will initiate the dispute
27 resolution process (and, if necessary, file a discovery motion) under Local Rule 37.1
28 et seq.

1 6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding will be on
2 the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose
3 (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may
4 expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating Party has waived
5 or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties will continue to afford the
6 material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing
7 Party's designation until the Court rules on the challenge.

8
9 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

10 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is
11 disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this
12 Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such
13 Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the
14 conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a Receiving
15 Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL DISPOSITION).

16 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a
17 location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons
18 authorized under this Order.

19 7.2 Disclosure of "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items. Unless
20 otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a
21 Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated
22 "CONFIDENTIAL" only to:

23 (a) the Receiving Party's Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as well
24 as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary
25 to disclose the information for this Action;

26 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the
27 Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;
28

1 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom
2 disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the
3 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

4 (d) the Court and its personnel;

5 (e) court reporters and their staff;

6 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional
7 Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have
8 signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

9 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a
10 custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

11 (h) during their depositions, witnesses ,and attorneys for witnesses, in the
12 Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing party
13 requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit A hereto; and (2) they will
14 not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the
15 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise
16 agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed
17 deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may be
18 separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as
19 permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and

20 (i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel,
21 mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

22
23 8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED IN
24 OTHER LITIGATION

25 If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation
26 that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as
27 “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:
28

1 (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification will
2 include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

3 (b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order
4 to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena
5 or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification will include a copy of
6 this Stipulated Protective Order; and

7 (c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued
8 by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

9 If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with
10 the subpoena or court order will not produce any information designated in this action
11 as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the subpoena
12 or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission. The
13 Designating Party will bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in that court
14 of its confidential material and nothing in these provisions should be construed as
15 authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a lawful
16 directive from another court.

17
18 9. A NON-PARTY’S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE
19 PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

20 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a
21 Non-Party in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such information
22 produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the
23 remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be
24 construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

25 (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to
26 produce a Non-Party’s confidential information in its possession, and the Party is
27 subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party’s
28 confidential information, then the Party will:

1 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party
2 that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement
3 with a Non-Party;

4 (2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated
5 Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably
6 specific description of the information requested; and

7 (3) make the information requested available for inspection by the Non-
8 Party, if requested.

9 (c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court within
10 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party
11 may produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery
12 request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party will not
13 produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the
14 confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court.
15 Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party will bear the burden and expense
16 of seeking protection in this court of its Protected Material.

17
18 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

19 If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed
20 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this
21 Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in
22 writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts
23 to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or
24 persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order,
25 and (d) request such person or persons to execute the "Acknowledgment and
26 Agreement to Be Bound" that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE PROTECTED MATERIAL

When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection, the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever procedure may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production without prior privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar as the parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a communication or information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated protective order submitted to the court.

12. MISCELLANEOUS

12.1 Right to Further Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

12.3 Filing Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material under seal is denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the information in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

13. FINAL DISPOSITION

After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within 60 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in this subdivision, “all Protected Material” includes all copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or destroyed and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or constitute Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in Section 4 (DURATION).

///

///

///

///

///

///

///

///

///

1 14. Any willful violation of this Order may be punished by civil or criminal
2 contempt proceedings, financial or evidentiary sanctions, reference to disciplinary
3 authorities, or other appropriate action at the discretion of the Court.

4
5 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

6 Respectfully submitted,

7
8 Dated: September 30, 2024

KNIGHT LAW GROUP, LLP

9
10 By: 

Debra Reed
Russell Higgins
Attorneys for Plaintiff

11
12
13 Dated: September 30, 2024

RUGGERELLO LAW GROUP LLP

14
15
16 By: 

Kristan L. Ruggerello
Attorneys for Defendant

17
18
19
20
21 FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

22
23
24 DATED: 10/1/24



HON. CHARLES F. EICK
United States Magistrate Judge

EXHIBIT A

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, _____ [full name], of _____
[full address], declare under penalty of perjury that I have read in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of California on [date] in the case of _____ [insert case name and number]. I agree to comply with and to be bound by all the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order and I understand and acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions and punishment in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any manner any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after termination of this action. I hereby appoint _____ [full name] of _____ [full address and telephone number] as my California agent for service of process in connection with this action or any proceedings related to enforcement of this Stipulated Protective Order.

Date: _____

City and State where signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____